

DESOTO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TOMMY LEWIS, PRESIDENT, PRESIDING

September 14, 1998

A. CALL TO ORDER

The September 14, 1998, meeting of the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Supervisor Tommy Lewis.

Sheriff James Albert Riley of DeSoto County was present and did open the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors meeting in a regular session to hear any and all business to come before the Board. The following were present:

Jessie Medlin-----District 1
Eugene C. Thach-----District 2
James D. Pearson-----District 3
John Caldwell-----District 4
Tommy Lewis-----District 5
W. E. “Sluggo” Davis-----Chancery Clerk
James Albert Riley -----Sheriff of DeSoto County
Clovis Reed-----County Administrator
Tony Nowak-----Board Attorney
Bobby Chamberlain-----Board Attorney

B. INVOCATION

The invocation was presented by Supervisor John Caldwell.

C. OLD BUSINESS

1. Travel Request - Civic Center

Vanessa Lynchard presented to the Board of Supervisors a Travel Request for Stuart Taylor of the Civic Center in the amount of \$ 850.00. Vanessa said the trip was to Salt Lake City, Utah, for September 10th-13th, and said she had spoken with Rex Haynes of the CVB regarding this trip to Salt Lake City and Mr. Haynes stated if the Board of Supervisors did not approve Mr. Taylor’s travel request, the CVB would pay for this out of their budget.

Supervisor Jessie Medlin made the motion, and Supervisor John Caldwell seconded the motion to approve the travel request in the amount of \$ 850.00 for Mr. Stuart Taylor. The **motion passed** by a vote as follows:

Jessie Medlin-----Yes
Eugene C. Thach-----Yes
James D. Pearson-----Yes
John Caldwell-----Yes
Tommy Lewis-----Yes

****SEE EXHIBIT C.1****

ITEM D, CONTINUED,

D. BUDGET

1. Joey Treadway - Tax Collector

Mr. Joey Treadway, Tax Collector came before the Board of Supervisors to discuss budget cuts in his department for FY99.

Mr. Treadway stated DeSoto County is the 7th fastest growing County in the nation. Mr. Treadway said he did not feel his department should be cutting services to the public.

Mr. Treadway said on June 15th, 1998, he received a professional form for the FY99 Budget from the County Administrator Clovis Reed requesting budget information. Mr. Treadway stated the form was to be returned to the County Administrator or to the Comptroller no later than July 5th, 1998. Mr. Treadway proceeded to say he worked very hard and diligently to return the requested information by the deadline.

Mr. Treadway reminded the Board of Supervisors, he has been Tax Collector for the past eleven (11) years and this is his tenth (10th) budget season. Mr. Treadway stated he has three (3) long term employees which have helped him with his budget.

The Tax Collector, Mr. Treadway, said on August 11th, 1998, he received a professional budget, which had been recommended by the County Administrator, Clovis Reed. Mr. Treadway said he had not heard another word until Friday, when his department budget had been cut by \$ 41,830.00. Mr. Treadway said the Board had met throughout the entire month of August to get this budget approved. Mr. Treadway reminded the Board of Supervisors, the Tax Levy has to be set and sent to the State Tax Commission by the 15th of September. Supervisor John Caldwell said that is why the Board is meeting today. Mr. Treadway replied he thought it unfair for one (1) man to return and change an entire budget.

Mr. Treadway expressed his concerns to the Board of Supervisors in connection with losing good long term employees to surrounding areas due to higher paying positions. Mr. Treadway said in the past few months we have lost a Planner, Computer Programmer, and now a County Administrator.

Mr. Treadway said his department had collected \$ 796,000.00 this year and by law he was only required to invest \$ 214,000.00 in interest bearing accounts. Mr. Treadway expressed he felt his department deserved a 7% increase in pay. Mr. Treadway told the Board of Supervisors the State Auditor recommended his department hiring a second bookkeeper due to the rate of growth in DeSoto County.

Supervisor Tommy Lewis said this was the first he had heard the audit department recommending hiring an extra bookkeeper. Mr. Treadway said not one of the Board of Supervisors has been in his department long enough to even know what transpires.

Supervisor Eugene Thach asked Mr. Treadway, should there be a consistency in pay rate. Mr. Treadway said yes, however, some departments have given a higher increase than 5%. Supervisor Tommy Lewis said that is true, however, these employees are lower down the ladder than your employees. Mr. Treadway reminded the Board of Supervisors as a department head he never goes over his budget. Supervisor Jessie Medlin said he could not vote on a budget that he does not know what is in it.

Supervisor Eugene Thach said Mr. Reed and Supervisor Caldwell were given instructions to cut the padding from the budget and keep the contingency fund. Mr. Treadway said he had no problem with what Supervisor Caldwell did, but it was in the manner in which it was handled that bothered him.

ITEM D, CONTINUED,

9/14/98

Supervisor Eugene Thach said he assumed the County Administrator Clovis Reed had met with all department heads to discuss their individual budgets. Mr. Treadway said if you want to cut this position, than he would bite the bullet. Supervisor Thach said this is the Board's budget, not Supervisor John Caldwell's.

Mr. Treadway said his department is trying to give quality service, as his department interacts with the public. Supervisor John Caldwell asked Mr. Treadway if the Board of Supervisors approved this position. Mr. Treadway replied no. The County Administrator Clovis Reed explained to Mr. Treadway any new positions must be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Eugene Thach asked Mr. Treadway if he was going to lay an employee off, and Mr. Treadway responded, he did not know.

Mr. Treadway suggested to the Board consulting with him before they work on his budget. Supervisor Eugene Thach said Mr. Treadway knows the Board works on the budget every year during budget season. Supervisor Thach explained to Mr. Treadway the Board had gone over every line item of the budget including salary issues.

Supervisor Jake Pearson said I know you think your people are the best in the County. Everyone thinks that their's are the best. Supervisor Pearson said that the Tax Collector could give some employees a 8% raise and others a 2%. That decision is up to the Tax Collector.

Supervisor John Caldwell asked if the Board of Supervisors had already approved the hire. Joey Treadway said no, he put the employee in a position that was vacant. Supervisor Caldwell asked when the Board approved the hire. Joey Treadway said the Board did not approve the hire and said the person was hired to fill a vacant position after she learns the job, Mr. Treadway said he plans to move her to the position of assistant bookkeeper. Supervisor Eugene Thach asked if the Board does not approve the position in the budget, is the Tax Collector planning to vacant the position. Mr. Treadway said he did not know. Supervisor Thach suggested Mr. Treadway coming before the Board of Supervisor to keep them aware of changes in his office. Mr. Treadway asked the Board to make sure everyone else is going by the same guidelines.

1. Delta Branch Experimental Station

Mr. Art Smith, Mr. Milton Jones, and Senator Bill Hawks came before the Board of Supervisors with concerns in connection with the Delta Branch Experimental Station funding.

Mr. Smith said he is mutually interdependent upon the Delta Branch Experimental Station as a lot of money goes into this project and it is not restricted just to one (1) area. Mr. Smith said he has been approached with questions for which he had no answer and he has relied on the Delta Branch Experimental Station for research.

Mr. Milton Jones said the Delta Branch is a source to better ourselves. Mr. Jones said Delta Branch is very informative, and he is very pleased to hear DeSoto County does have a contingency budget. Mr. Jones said he will be 77 year of age in December, as this is his 55th year of crop growing in DeSoto County and the 4th County agent. Mr. Jones said he has worked with this project is imperative to Mississippi for research, and suggested increasing their budget.

Senator Bill Hawks said he understands the concerns of the Board as to why DeSoto County is funding this project. Senator Hawks said this research is beneficial to DeSoto County. Senator Hawks said the Delta Experimental Station has been conducting research in global positions, soil conservation with yield mapping.

9/14/98

ITEM D.2, CONTINUED,

Senator Hawks said instead of cutting services we need to enhance these services to the homeowners. In 1993 Mississippi received 27.9 million direct from farm income which over 30% of the State’s economy. There is a need for this type of investment.

Senator Hawks suggested to the Board if possible, they travel to the Delta Branch Experimental Station to see first hand what is going on. Supervisor Eugene Thach suggested to Senator Hawks during next year’s budget hearings some of the employees of the Delta Branch Experimental Station should come to the Board meetings with a presentation.

Chancery Court Clerk W.E. “Sluggo” Davis presented a letter from Mr. Clarence Sparks in support of this program.

Supervisor John Caldwell said in the last few days he had researched this project, and felt like funding should remain at the requested level. Supervisor Caldwell said some political and government programs do fail, however, research does go on.

Supervisor John Caldwell asked County Administrator Clovis Reed to reinstate funds for Delta Branch Experimental Station. Mr. Reed said funds remained at \$ 21,000.00.

Supervisor Tommy Lewis thanked Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones, and Senator Hawks for their support of the Delta Experimental Station. Supervisor Lewis said the budget is not adopted yet, and you will probably receive requested funding for this project.

APPROVAL OF BUDGET

ORDER APPROVING COUNTY BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 1998, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1999.

BE IT ORDERED:

That the County Budget prepared under the provisions of Section 19-11-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is hereby approved and adopted for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1998, and ending September 30, 1999, and will be entered at length and in detail upon the minutes of this Board following this Order. Further, the Board of Supervisors agreed to set the tax levy at 85.10 mills as detailed. Supervisor John Caldwell made a motion to adopt the Budget. Supervisor Eugene Thach seconded the motion.

That the following vote was taken on this action:

First District Supervisor Jessie Medlin	<u>No</u>
Second District Supervisor Eugene C. Thach	<u>Yes</u>
Third District Supervisor James D. Pearson	<u>Yes</u>
Fourth District Supervisor John M. M. Caldwell, Sr.	<u>Yes</u>
Fifth District Supervisor Tommy Lewis	<u>Yes</u>

E. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The “Executive Session” portion of this meeting is presented under the portion of minutes called “Executive Session

ITEM F, CONTINUED,

F. OTHER ISSUES

1. Sheriff’s Department - Special Task Force

Dale Thompson, Comptroller presented a check request for approval by the Board of Supervisors in the amount of \$ 2,511.85 to the Special Task Force in the Sheriff’s department. Supervisor Jessie Medlin made the motion, and Supervisor John Caldwell seconded the motion to approve the check request in the amount of \$ 2,511.85 to the Special Task Force. The **motion passed** by a vote as follows:

Jessie Medlin-----Yes
Eugene C. Thach-----Yes
James D. Pearson-----Yes
John Caldwell-----Yes
Tommy Lewis----- Yes

****SEE EXHIBIT F.1****

2. Ranch Road - Right of Way

Supervisor Tommy Lewis made the motion, and Supervisor Jessie Medlin seconded the motion to approve Right of Way Acquisition of Ranch Road not to exceed the amount of \$ 1,000.00. The **motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Eugene Thach made the motion and Supervisor Jessie Medlin seconded the motion to recess until Monday, September 21, 1998 at 9:00 a.m. The **motion passed** by a unanimous vote.

THIS the 14th day of September, 1998, these minutes have been read and approved by the DeSoto County Board of Supervisors.

TOMMY LEWIS, President
DeSoto County Board of Supervisors